Growth of agriculture sector

*77. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Statistical Organization has estimated the growth of agriculture sector only 2.7 per cent in 2006-07;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the action taken by Government to increase the growth of agriculture sector?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) According to the latest advance estimates of National Accounts released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), the growth rate of agriculture and allied sectors (at 1999-2000 prices) is expected to be 2.7 per cent for the year 2006-07. The growth rate of 2.7 per cent in 2006-07 is over a growth rate of 6.0 per cent achieved in 2005-06.

(c) Some of the major steps initiated by the Central Government to enhance agricultural production are given below:

* Implementation of Integrated Cereal Development Programme (ICDP) in Rice, Wheat and other Cereal-based cropping system areas, Sustainable Development of Sugarcane-based cropping system and Special Jute Development Programme.

* Launching of Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) for raising the yield potential of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize.

* Announcement of enhanced Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) well before the commencement of sowing season to enable farmers to decide on the choice of crops to be grown by them.

* Agricultural diversification through horticulture and floriculture.

* Development/strengthening of modern agricultural markets through creation of space for attracting investment from private and cooperative sectors for the development of direct marketing and contract farming.

* Reorientation of the credit facility, especially production credit, to rural and farmer households at concessional rate of interest.

* Revitalization of agricultural research to ensure full exploitation of scientific advances for improving productivity according to agro-climatic conditions.

* Revitalization of Agricultural extension system through Krishi Vikas Kendras in each district and making extension system more farmer-friendly by way of autonomous institutional arrangements for technological dissemination through "Agricultural Technology Management "Agency" (ATMA) at district level.

* The newly approved National Rainfed Area Authority is expected to deal with the problems faced by rainfed areas.

* National Horticulture Mission is under implementation to boost area and production of horticulture crops through establishing backward and forward linkages.

Regional Cancer Institute status to Mahaveer Cancer Institute, Patna

†*78. SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Committee constituted by Government in the year 2002 had recommended for according Regional Cancer Institute status to the Mahaveer Cancer Institute, Patna;

(b) if so, the reasons for not according Regional Cancer Institute status to the said institute, so far;

(c) whether Government propose to accord status of Regional Cancer Institute to the said institute; and

(d) if so, the details of action being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (d) Yes Sir, a Committee was constituted in 2001 to assess the Cancer treatment facilities at Mahaveer Cancer Institute, Patna (Bihar), which inspected the institute on 17.5.01 and *inter-alia* recommended that the institute could be considered for granting Regional Cancer Centre

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.